

had one of the highest rates of veterans per capita, and it is why towns across Maine offer a wide range of resources to help lift up our fellow citizens struggling with challenges ranging from substance use disorders to unemployment to food insecurity. I have been lucky enough to travel to every corner and pocket of our State, and the way our communities care for our own never ceases to amaze me. No matter if it is a time of crisis or business as usual, Maine people are in it together. That is a profoundly rare phenomenon, and we are infinitely better for it.

Maine's motto, "Dirigo," is simple, declarative, and fitting; translated from Latin, it means "I Lead." That is exactly right: For the last 200 years, Maine has led the way, economically, politically, and socially. As we honor the 200th anniversary of Maine's statehood, I know that our State is positioned to continue its leadership for generations to come. So, regardless of which of the 16 counties you are from, let us come together—as is the Maine tradition—and celebrate our great fortune to live, work, and play in the greatest State in the Nation. Happy 200th birthday, Maine, and thanks to each and every person who makes our State so special. Thanks to your efforts, I am certain we will see history repeat itself as Maine embarks on another 200 years of prosperity, community, common sense, and leadership.

55TH ANNIVERSARY OF "BLOODY SUNDAY"

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this past weekend marked the 55th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, one of the darkest moments in our democracy. On March 7, 1965, Alabama law enforcement officers brutally attacked hundreds of peaceful demonstrators marching from Selma to Montgomery to demand full civil rights for African Americans. These brave protesters put their safety and liberty on the line to build an America that lives up to its ideals of freedom, justice, and equality. It is thanks to their heroism—and the heroism of many civil rights activists before and since—that our country has made great strides towards those ideals. However, in order to fully honor their struggle, we must also recognize that much of the hatred and discrimination which they fought to root out persists, although perhaps in less overt or easily recognized forms.

One of the strongest, most disheartening examples of this phenomenon is the ongoing assault on the right of minorities to vote. This is not ancient history. States all over the country continue to "modernize" strategies developed a century ago to suppress African-American voting power. Some of these strategies are blatant and recognizable, like mass purges of voter rolls; the gerrymandering of districts with "surgical precision," according to one court; and intimidation of voters of color. Some of the strategies are dis-

guised behind excuses or fear tactics, like obstructive voter ID laws, felony disenfranchisement, and closures of polling sites in heavily minority-populated areas.

So long as we allow these sorts of practices to continue, we are denying American citizens the right to vote promised to them by our Constitution, and we are undermining the integrity of our democracy. This is a problem on principle, of course—until we guarantee the right to vote regardless of race, we fall short of the unique promise and potential of the United States of America. But it is also a problem for broader practical reasons—when we exclude people from fully participating in our democracy, we prevent them from achieving the social, economic, and civic reforms they need to strengthen their communities.

So, what are we going to do about that? I know what I will do: I will fight for laws that will guarantee every American a voice in our democracy. That is why I have introduced bills like the Democracy Restoration Act, S.1068, to restore the Federal right to vote to ex-offenders, and the Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation and Suppression Act, S.1834, to penalize the voter suppression efforts so frequently aimed at minority communities.

It is also why I am a fervent supporter of H.R. 4, the Voting Rights Advancement Act. This bill, which was passed by the House of Representatives at the end of last year, would remedy the Supreme Court's 2013 decision decimating section 5 of the Voting Rights Act and thereby strengthen our ability to prevent discriminatory changes to State voting laws and procedures. I thank Senator LEAHY for championing this bill and call on Leader MCCONNELL and Chairman GRAHAM to urgently bring H.R. 4 for consideration in Committee and in the Senate.

Let's honor all of those whose struggles for freedom and equality throughout our Nation's history have been met with violence and hatred. Let's carry on their torch and help make their dreams a reality. Let's fulfill the right to vote.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the League of Women Voters of the United States. With a commitment to civic participation, the League has secured its place nationally as a relied-upon source of voter education and a protector of voting rights. The centennial celebration is a historical benchmark for the State of Michigan, as well as the entire Nation.

Just 6 months before the ratification of the 19th Amendment, the suffragists of the National American Woman Suffrage Association as well as other suffrage groups embarked on a mission to ensure that voters, particularly women, would have the necessary non-

partisan information to make informed decisions on who and what to support in elections. With this newfound mission, the suffrage movement began a "mighty political experiment" designed to help 20 million women carry out their new civic duty.

With Michigan women winning the right to vote in 1918, the mission to educate Michigan women voters started before the League was established nationally when the Michigan League of Women Voters formed out of the Michigan Equal Suffrage Association in 1919. The following year, they became part of the League of Women Voters of the United States. The early Michigan LWV advocated for changes to State-level voter registration laws and civil service reform; they also established citizenship classes through citizenship schools in people's homes. Many of their actions influenced early programs of the National League, and the intent of those programs continue today through the League's work.

While the League is nonpartisan, even from their conception, the League used their voice and their platform for advocacy. One of their earliest initiatives was for child welfare reform, as well as civil service and election law reforms across the country. In 1941, the League advocated successfully for amending Michigan State law to forbid factory work by those under 16 and to mandate school attendance by all children between the ages of 7 and 16. Other major legislation the League advocated for includes the Equal Rights Amendment, National Voter Registration Act, and the Help America Vote Act.

Today, Leagues from across the country advocate for issues such as fighting voter suppression, limiting the influence of money in politics, and redistricting. They are constantly encouraging and pushing for further investment in our election infrastructure and election security. With a presence in over 700 communities and across all 50 States, the League of Women Voters of the United States has become an activist, grassroots organization which plays a critical role in our democracy.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate the League of Women Voters of the United States on the lasting impact it has made throughout our Nation's history and for the work it continues to do. As the League of Women Voters of the United States celebrates this centennial milestone, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating its members and extending best wishes for continued success in the years ahead.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.